

Message Text

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PAGE 01 YAOUND 02357 021528Z
ACTION OPIC-06

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 EB-07 /024 W
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FM AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2107
INFO USDOC WASHDC

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE YAOUNDE 2357

DEPT PASS OPIC FOR HENDERSON

E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: EFIN, EAGR, CM
SUBJ: PENDING DEL MONTE PROJECT

REF: STATE 124269

1. POSSIBILITY OF DEL MONTE/CDC PINEAPPLES PROJECT AROSE DURING MEETING WITH JOHN NGU, GENERAL MANAGER OF CDC. NGU WAS OUTLINING PROPOSED EXPANSION PLANS AND MENTIONED GOING INTO NEW AG PRODUCTS. ECONOFF MENTIONED DEL MONTE AND THEIR DESIRE FOR SOURCE OF FRESH PINEAPPLES AND BANANAS AND ASKED IF CDC WOULD BE INTERESTED. NGU SAID HE WOULD LIKE TO TALK TO THEM.

2. DURING ARGALL/BRAULT VISIT LAST FEBRUARY, THEY HAD DISCUSSED FRESH PINEAPPLES/BANANAS PROJECT WITH MPOUMA OF MINAG, OUTLINING REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PROJECT-CORRECT ALTITUDE, SOIL, RAIN FALL, PHYSICAL PROXIMITY TO DOUALA FOR SHIPMENT BY AIR AND SEA AND (VERY IMPORTANT) AN EXISTING ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE WITH WHICH DEL MONTE COULD WORK AS TECH ADVISOR AND BUYER. THERE IS AN EXISTING BANABA ORGANIZATION WHICH MIGHT BE SUITABLE, BUT IT IS ALREADY LINKED TO FRENCH BUYERS WITH WHICH DEL MONTE INTENDS TO COMPETE. CDC ON THE OTHER HAND IS NEW TO PINEAPPLES AND NEEDS TECH ASSIST. SECOND, CDC BANANAS (TO BEST OF MY
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KNOWLEDGE) ARE NOT MARKETED TO ANY FIXED GROUP.

3. IN ECONOFF OPINION, IF CDC AND DEL MONTE CAN WORK IT OUT, IT HAS MAKINGS OF AN EXCELLENT PROJECT. DEL MONTE DOES NOT WISH TO INVEST AT EARLY STAGE AND ONLY WANTS TECH ADVISORY ROLE AND MARKETING. CDC IS OF SUFFICIENT SIZE AND STRENGTH TO HANDLE FILED TRIALS, ETC., THUS AVOIDING USUAL PROBLEMS. SECOND,

CDC HAS ALREADY OBTAINED APPROX \$24.5 MILLION FOR PLANNED EXPANSION PROGRAM, AND INTEGRATION OF PINEAPPLES INTO SCHEME OUGHT NOT CAUSE ANY MAJOR PROBLEMS. THIRD, CDC STAFF IS LARGE, COMPETENT, CAMEROONIAN AND ANGLOPHONE AND SHOULD BE AN EXCELLENT MATCH FOR DEL MONTE. FOURTH, CDC IS LOCATED IN GOOD AGRICULTURAL AREA WITH READY ACCESS TO PORTS OF DOUALA AND TIKO/VICTORIA. FIFTH, GURC SHOULD SUPPORT IT AS IT WOULD PROVIDE AN AMERICAN PRESENCE IN ECONOMICALLY DEPRESSED ANGLOPHONE CAMEROON. LAST,

AND IN ECONOFF OPINON MOST IMPORTANT, DEL MONTE WOULD BE WORKING DIRECTLY WITH CDC WITH MINIMAL GURC, MINAG, SNI, MIN FINANCE, AND FOREIGN TECHNICAL ADVISOR PARTICIPATION. AFTER GURC, CDC IS LARGEST EMPLOYER IN CAMEROON, BORROWS MONEY FROM CENTRAL BANK ON SAME RATE AS COMMERCIAL BANKS, DEALS DIRECTLY WITH FOREIGN ASSISTANCE GROUPS, AND IN GENERAL PRETTY MUCH OPERATES ON ITS OWN. AS OF JUNE 1976, CDC CONTROLLED ABOUT 80,000 HECTARES WITH OVER 10,000 EMPLOYEES. IT IS EXPANDING ACTIVITIES OUT OF MT. CAMEROON AREA TO INCLUDE OIL PALM IN LITTORAL AND NDU TEA ESTATE(NORTH WEST PROVINCE).

4. TO THE BEST OF OUR KNOWLEDGE, CDC NEITHER WANTS NOR NEEDS FOREIGN INVESTMENT FOR GROWING PINEAPPLES. THEY PRODUCED OVER 11,000 TONS OF BANANAS IN CROP YEAR 75/76. ALTHOUGH FURTHER POSSIBLE EXPANSION INTO CANNING OF PINEAPPLES, FACTORY FOR MAKING CANS, ETC., MIGHT REQUIRE DEL MONTE INVESTMENT. THIS, WOULD FIT IN WITH ARGALL'S COMMENTS DURING FEBRUARY VISIT.

5. ACTION REQUESTED: RECOMMEND IF DEL MONTE INTERESTED IN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PURSUING CDC OPTION, THEY SEND REP TO DISCUSS WITH NGU AS SOON AS CONVENIENT. IF CDC OPTION NOT FEASIBLE, THERE IS ALWAYS SNI-MINAG POSSIBILITY, BUT BELIEVE DEL MONTE CAN GET FARTHER FASTER WITH CDC.
MITHOEFER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FRUIT, INVESTMENT PROGRAMS
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Sent Date: 02-Jun-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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